

# U.S.-INDIA MILITARY RELATIONSHIP: MATCHING EXPECTATIONS

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**U.S.-India Military Relationship: Matching Expectations**

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## Research Paper Abstract

### U.S.-India Military Relationship: Matching Expectations

**Problem Statement:** President Bush's visit to India in 2006 created expectations of greater military cooperation between Washington and New Delhi. The military relationship between the two countries has proved difficult in the past for a number of geopolitical reasons. For example, Washington and New Delhi disagreed on India's non-aligned stance during the Cold War, on the role of Pakistan in South Asia and on nuclear weapons.<sup>1</sup> Since sanctions were waived against India in September 2001, the military relationship has often outpaced other aspects of this renewed engagement, but the Government of India and especially its military are unsure that the United States is a reliable defense supplier and ally. Resolving these challenges over the next five years will determine the extent of military cooperation between the two nations and will avoid creating unrealistic expectations regarding a strategic military partnership. To be successful, the military-to-military relationship must fit into the current domestic and international political agendas of both countries. Military cooperation could be the catalyst for greater collaboration in areas of mutual interest between "the world's oldest democracy and the world's largest democracy."<sup>2</sup>

**Purpose:** Given the U.S.-India geopolitical context, determine what types of military cooperation are most likely to be successful and which types should be avoided.

**Approach:** Review the strengths and challenges of current bilateral programs by comparing U.S. and Indian geopolitical interests to identify which are complementary and which are in conflict. Based on this comparison, determine what types of military cooperation are most likely to be viewed as mutually beneficial and what types are problematic for one or the other. The scope of the research is focused on the next five years (2007-2012) as documented in available literature (see Works Cited) and using official government documents and interviews with knowledgeable members of the U.S. Departments of Defense and State, and India's Ministries of External Affairs and Defense. Based on this research and analysis, I will develop a framework for the evaluation of specific types of military cooperation.

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<sup>1</sup> Ashley J. Tellis, "Seeking Breakthroughs: The Meandering US-India Relationship Needs a Fresh Impetus," *Force*, March 2005, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Embassy of India, "Remarks Give by Vice President Al Gore," *Press Release*, 15 September 2000 <[http://www.indianembassy.org/indusrel/pm\\_us\\_2000/gore\\_pm\\_september\\_15\\_2000.htm](http://www.indianembassy.org/indusrel/pm_us_2000/gore_pm_september_15_2000.htm)>.



## Executive Summary

Almost immediately after the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001, the Government of India offered support to Washington and opened its military bases for U.S. military use. Even though the U.S. did not utilize all the support extended by New Delhi, India's offer of military assistance kick-started a dramatic expansion of the military relationship between the two capitals. On September 27, 2001 the U.S. Government suspended the sanctions against New Delhi that had been in place since India's nuclear tests in May 1998.

Starting first with engagement programs, including personnel exchanges for education and training, and military conferences, the defense relationship moved further forward with military exercises. These began as small-unit training exercises, but today include major annual exercises involving the armies, navies and air forces of both nations. The result has been an increasing mutual understanding of how the two militaries operate, are equipped and train. The sale of U.S. military equipment, while seen as the "very best" by India, has not grown as quickly as engagement programs and exercises; in fact, U.S. sales have been minimal.

The rapid development of military cooperation between Washington and New Delhi after 9/11 reflects the new political engagement between the two capitals. The developing strategic partnership aims at addressing common national interests—defeat of terrorism, preventing proliferation, energy security, stability in South Asia, maintaining open sea lanes, economic cooperation and counterbalancing a rising China.

The extent to which the U.S. and India can cooperate on these issues and others will be tempered by international and domestic political realities. The first 50 years of the U.S.-India relationship was shaped by the Cold War, including India's role in the Non-Aligned Movement. The future relationship will undoubtedly reflect how the U.S.-China relationship evolves, as well as the role of Pakistan, particularly with regard to Afghanistan. If U.S. relations with China deteriorate, then India becomes much more important. Similarly, if U.S. relations with China improve, then India could become somewhat less crucial as a U.S. strategic partner.



### **About the Author**

Colonel D. Scott Denney was commissioned in 1984 in the U.S. Army as an infantry officer. After serving tours with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne (Air Assault) Division, the 197<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade and the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, he was selected as a Foreign Area Officer specializing in South Asia. Prior to his assignment at the Atlantic Council he served four years with the Office of Defense Cooperation in New Delhi, India. Colonel Denney has also served on the Joint Staff, Pentagon, and he holds a B.A. in History from the University of Dayton and an M.A. in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School.

Colonel Denney was the U.S. Army War College's Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council from 2006-2007 and wrote this paper while in residence with the Council. The Atlantic Council is pleased to present his work. The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not represent the views of the Atlantic Council, U.S. Department of Defense or the U.S. Army.



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## U.S.-India Military Relationship: Matching Expectations

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### I. Introduction

President Bush's visit to India in March 2006 created expectations for greater civilian, government and military cooperation between Washington and New Delhi. The political/military relationship between the two countries has proved difficult in the past for a number of reasons. During the Cold War years and after, Washington and New Delhi were at odds over India's non-aligned stance, the U.S. relationship with Pakistan and on India's civil and military nuclear aspirations.<sup>3</sup> After India tested nuclear devices in May 1998 the U.S. imposed sanctions cutting off military programs as well as sales of military equipment and spares for existing U.S. equipment.

Those sanctions were waived in September 2001 after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and on the Pentagon in Washington D.C. The Government of India (GoI) offered its full support to the U.S. Government for its war on terrorism, and this support "galvanized the change in Indo-U.S. military relationship."<sup>4</sup> Since then, the military relationship has often outpaced the other aspects of this renewed relationship. U.S.-India military cooperation could be the catalyst for greater interaction in areas of mutual interest between the United States and India.

The next five years (2007-2012) will likely define to what extent military cooperation can contribute to the current and longer-range strategic agendas of both the U.S. and India. This paper will explore the history of the U.S.-India military relations as a backdrop for understanding how bilateral military cooperation can be strengthened and expanded. To help avoid unrealistic expectations regarding a strategic military partnership, this paper will identify feasible opportunities for military cooperation—available now and over the next five years—that are likely to be viewed as mutually productive and beneficial to both nations.

### II. Overview of U.S.-India Military Relations

The U.S.-Indian military and political relationship since India's independence from Britain on 15 August 1947 has fluctuated between hot and cold despite the similarities between the two countries. Both the U.S. and India have "democratic political systems, pluralistic societies, and similar legal traditions. Many disappointments have resulted from the fact that although the long-term objectives of both states in world peace,

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<sup>3</sup> Ashley J. Tellis, "Seeking Breakthroughs: The Meandering U.S.-India Relationship Needs Fresh Impetus," *Force*, October 2005, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Sumit Ganguly, Brian Shoup, Andrew Scobell, eds., *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation Into The 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (New York: Routledge, 2006) 89.

prosperity, and stability were the same, they have seldom agreed on how to pursue these ends in specific areas or in a given time frame.”<sup>3</sup>

These difficulties developed, in part, from India’s early refusal to become entangled in any Cold War-era alliances. Jawaharlal Nehru, India’s first and longest-serving prime minister (1947 until his death in 1964) had been a prominent leader of India’s independence movement and believed strongly in the need to protect India’s independence on the world stage. He set New Delhi’s foreign policy priorities as:

- Adopting a non-aligned stance in the Cold War, assuming a decisive political-military posture in consolidating territorial integrity of India *vis-à-vis* Pakistan.
- Attempting to establish friendly relations with the U.S. and Soviet Union.
- Developing friendly relations with China.
- Initiating moves to unite newly independent countries on matters of common concern.<sup>5</sup>

Nehru’s strong desire that India remain independent in its foreign policy and should “cooperate with all countries, regardless of their ideological or political affiliations” led to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) that was influenced heavily by India throughout the Cold War years and was a fundamental part of India’s foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> Even with the end of the Cold War, India’s foreign policy still seeks independence in decision making and avoiding foreign alliances and coalitions unless they are in India’s national interests.

Although India never aligned politically or militarily with the United States, under President Eisenhower the economic relationship between Washington and New Delhi grew, especially in fields of technology.<sup>7</sup> Prime Minister Nehru also supported President Eisenhower’s “Atoms for Peace” initiative and cooperated on a partial test ban treaty.<sup>8</sup>

However, over time Washington’s and New Delhi differences in perceptions of their “strategic and security interests” became more apparent.<sup>9</sup> The U.S. perceived India’s primary role in the Non-Aligned Movement and their support for newly independent Third-World countries as being at odds with Washington’s interests.<sup>10</sup> Nehru believed that relations with the U.S. could be constructive and improved “once the Americans overcame their suspicions of non-alignment—a suspicion based on their anti-

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<sup>5</sup> J.N. Dixit, *India’s Foreign Policy 1947-2003* (New Delhi: Picus Books, 2003), 37.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 67-68.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.



Communist phobia.”<sup>11</sup> Nehru worked to keep positive relations between Washington and New Delhi. Washington’s perception of India during the Cold War is best summed up as “even if India is not Red, it is decidedly pink and is a fellow traveler of the Communists.”<sup>12</sup> Additionally, India’s state-controlled economy limited U.S. investment in its markets.<sup>13</sup> Even so, there were several periods where both capitals worked closely on military-to-military issues of mutual importance.

### **1948: The First India-Pakistan War**

The U.S. reaction to India’s first war with Pakistan did not set the stage for cooperation between the two countries. Before departing the subcontinent in 1947, the British Government had orchestrated the division of its former colony into two separate states: the Republic of India and the Republic of Pakistan. Pakistan was itself divided into two separate wings: West Pakistan, bordering northwest India, and East Pakistan (today Bangladesh), which India almost completely surrounds in its northeast. It was not a clean cut.

Kashmir, India’s northernmost state, was at independence governed by Hari Singh, the descendent of a Hindu general, who did not initially decide to join either New Delhi nor Islamabad during the first months after independence.<sup>14</sup> Despite its Hindu prince, Kashmir had a majority Muslim population, along with minority populations of Hindus and Buddhists. In September 1947, tribesmen from Pakistan’s Northwest Frontier Province, backed by the Pakistani military, invaded Kashmir to bring it into the state of Pakistan by force.<sup>15</sup>

Hari Singh received Indian military support against the invasion only after he signed the Instrument of Accession on 27 October 1947, making Kashmir officially part of the new Republic of India.<sup>16</sup> Once deployed to Kashmir, India’s military stopped the invading Pakistani force, but only after the Pakistanis had captured the northwest portion of the state (now called Pakistan-occupied Kashmir by the Indians, and Azad Kashmir – “Free Kashmir” – by the Pakistanis).

New Delhi appealed to the United Nations over Pakistan’s invasion of Kashmir and fully expected it to rule in India’s favor, ordering Pakistan to abandon the territory it had occupied during the war. The Security Council, however, could only appeal for a cease-fire and appoint an observation force. In January 1949, under United Nations

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<sup>11</sup> Steven A. Hoffman, *India and the China Crisis*, (Berkley and Los Angeles: University of California, 1990), 51.

<sup>12</sup> Dixit, *India’s Foreign Policy 1947-2003*, 68.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>14</sup> Richard F. Nyrop (ed), *India A Country Study*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Foreign Area Studies (Washington DC: American University), 68.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

negotiations, both sides agreed to a ceasefire and resolutions on withdrawal of troops. These agreements were never implemented, and today both armies remain along the Line of Control (the 1948 cease-fire line). Pakistan continues today to claim Kashmir as a legitimate part of Pakistan.

The GoI correctly perceived that the United States and United Kingdom supported Pakistan in the U.N., as they considered Pakistan a more important partner in the Cold War because of its strategic location and willingness to support U.S. efforts to contain communism. Even today, some policy makers in the GoI view the U.S. relationship with Pakistan as having a dampening effect on U.S.-India relations and are particularly concerned when the U.S. chooses to arm Pakistan's military.

U.S. military aid to India immediately after independence was minimal, with the U.S. selling New Delhi 200 Sherman tanks but denying its request for 200 fighter aircraft because India was at that time receiving "huge development aid from the United States" and the request for fighters seemed to be at odds with New Delhi's aid program.<sup>17</sup> Washington believed that New Delhi's resources could be better used addressing its domestic challenges of the newly independent India.

### **1962: India-China War and Close U.S. Military Cooperation**

India's war with China began a close but brief military relationship with the United States as an effort to halt the Chinese Army's attacks and advance into Indian-held territory claimed by both New Delhi and Beijing.

On 20 October 1962 Chinese forces attacked Indian military positions in Aksai Chin, the eastern portion of Kashmir, and along the India-China border of northeast India (today the state of Arunachal Pradesh). The surprise attack by China's Peoples Liberation Army marked the abrupt end to years of negotiations over the two disputed areas. India's army was poorly equipped and suffered from poor military organization and inadequate defense capabilities, especially in the Northeast where it lacked enough troops trained to fight in a high-altitude environment.<sup>18</sup>

During the first days of fighting between the Indian and Chinese armies, the U.S. Department of State issued a statement condemning the Chinese attack and stating that any request (from India) for military assistance would be viewed favorably.<sup>19</sup> The then U.S. Ambassador to India, John Kenneth Galbraith, had been notified by the GoI that a request for military assistance was forthcoming and added that the GoI "hoped that America would not force India into an alliance or denigrate Indian sovereignty by

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<sup>17</sup> Ganguly, *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 64.

<sup>18</sup> Chris Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defense Policy?* (New York:Oxford University Press, 1994),101.

<sup>19</sup> Steven A. Hoffman, *India and the China Crisis*, (Berkley and Los Angels: University of California, 1990), 196.

imposing unacceptable inspection procedures governing the use of American arms.”<sup>20</sup> Ambassador Galbraith assured his Indian counterparts that the U.S. would not request any formal military alliance in exchange for military assistance.<sup>21</sup>

In addition to supporting the Indian Army with military equipment, the U.S. military attachés in New Delhi began to meet and work closely with officers and officials from India’s Ministry of Defense (MoD) to develop India’s specific military requirements.<sup>22</sup> To meet India’s request for military assistance, the U.S. Military Supply Mission to India (USMSMI) was established in November 1962 and was responsible for planning and implementing all aspects of the military assistance program to India.<sup>23</sup> (It would eventually grow in size to 150 personnel and, by 1964, was headed by a U.S. Air Force major general.)

The first U.S.-supplied weapons arrived on 12 November 1962 and consisted primarily of small arms, mortars and communication equipment.<sup>24</sup> By 17 November the Indian Army was in retreat from Askaniya Chini and in the Northeast, where the Indian Army’s defenses had been shattered by the advancing Chinese, leaving the area from the Northeast all the way to Calcutta open to occupation by the People’s Liberation Army. As a result, Nehru requested U.S. fighter aircraft to protect the interior of India. He also requested that the U.S. airlift Indian reinforcements from the western state of Punjab to Ladakh in Kashmir.<sup>25</sup> Even though the U.S. did ferry Indian troops into Ladakh, Washington did not need to provide fighter aircraft because the Chinese declared a cease-fire on 21 November.<sup>26</sup> Today China still occupies the territory captured during this conflict.

The U.S. military aid package to India in 1962 totaled \$373 million dollars.<sup>27</sup> Washington, however, did not fill New Delhi’s request for “several squadrons of fighter aircraft and two squadrons of B-47 bombers,” under the advice of Ambassador Galbraith, who believed that the introduction of aircraft into the war would “greatly accelerate the pace of combat as to preclude diplomatic possibilities.”<sup>28</sup>

Politically, the most visible sign of the U.S. Government’s support of India was the arrival of the U.S. Navy’s aircraft carrier the *USS Enterprise* and escort ships into the Bay of Bengal on 21 November, where they remained on station for several days. (Ironically, the *USS Enterprise* is remembered in India today not for its support of New

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 199.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> U.S. Embassy, India, *History of ODC*, Office of Defense Cooperation, 16 November 2006.

<sup>24</sup> Ganguly, *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 83.

<sup>25</sup> Hoffman, *India and the China Crisis*, 207.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 208-209.

<sup>27</sup> Ganguly, *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 67.

<sup>28</sup> Hoffman, *India and the China Crisis*, 208.

Delhi in 1962, but rather when it returned to the Bay of Bengal in political support of Pakistan during the 1971 India-Pakistan war.<sup>29)</sup>

U.S. military relations with New Delhi flourished for three years and then began to decline in 1965. It wasn't until the 1990s that the military relationship once again turned in a positive direction. After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S., the military relationship expanded further and rapidly.

### **1965: The Second Indian-Pakistan War**

The downturn in military relations coincided with the second India-Pakistan war that began on 22 August 1965 with Pakistan's surprise attack into India's northern state of Kashmir. Believing the Indian military had not recovered from its 1962 defeat by the Chinese army, it seemed to the Pakistanis an optimal time to take Kashmir by force.

Initially Pakistan's army succeeded in cutting the primary north-south highway in Kashmir. However, on 6 September India's new prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri (who became Prime Minister after Nehru's death in May 1964) ordered the Indian Army to attack into West Pakistan toward its third largest city, Lahore. Catching the Pakistani Army by surprise, this move forced Islamabad to shift troops out of Jammu and Kashmir to protect Lahore.<sup>30</sup>

China gave verbal support to Islamabad, but did not move its military to threaten India's northeast border in support of Pakistan, nor did the population of Kashmir rise up in rebellion against New Delhi nor support Pakistan's military ambitions in the region. On 23 September 1965 both sides agreed to a United Nations cease-fire, resulting in the 1965 war ending in a stalemate. The stalemate was described by one author as the result of "Pakistan performing badly rather than India performing well" as Pakistani pilots had difficulty maneuvering their U.S. F-104 fighters, and its armor forces had difficulty operating the fire control systems of its U.S. manufactured *Patton* tanks.<sup>31</sup>

Nevertheless, the Indian Army acquitted itself well after its 1962 defeat by China. Following negotiations, both sides agreed to resolve all outstanding issues thorough negotiations. Nothing became of the talks, however, as Prime Minister Shastri died in 1966, and Islamabad became more distracted as the union between East and West Pakistan was beginning to fray.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Dixit, *India's Foreign Policy 1947-2003*, 75.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defense Policy?*, 85.

<sup>32</sup> Richard F. Nyrop, ed., *Indian A Country Study*, (United States Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1986), 474.

During the 1965 conflict, Islamabad employed U.S. M-48 *Patton* tanks, which were more modern than India's armor force. Pakistan also had more modern U.S.-manufactured F-104 *Star Fighters* and F-86 *Saber* fighter aircraft. India's perception of Pakistan in 1965 was that Islamabad was emboldened to capture Jammu and Kashmir by force because even though India enjoyed a "quantitative" superiority, Islamabad had gained a qualitative edge.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, Islamabad believed it had the support of China and the U.S. in any conflict with New Delhi, and that would help ensure Pakistan's success both on the battlefield and at the United Nations.

New Delhi officially protested to Washington that U.S. weapons systems sold to Pakistan were employed in the 1965 war against India in violation of a promise made by President Eisenhower that arms supplied to Islamabad were only to be used defensively.<sup>34</sup> The U.S. government temporarily suspended military assistance to both warring parties during the 1965 war.

The war also boosted New Delhi's military and political relationship with the Soviet Union, that dated to the mid-1950s. Soviet military support began in earnest in the mid-1960s. India's army, navy and air force had begun an upgrade and modernization effort after the 1962 war with China, reflecting the growing Sino-Soviet split.<sup>35</sup> Moscow sold defense equipment to New Delhi on "favorable terms" by allowing India to pay in Rupees or to trade in-kind.<sup>36</sup>

Even though India had sought the purchase of American fighter aircraft such as the F-104 *Star Fighter*, F-101 *Voodoo* and F-102 *Delta Dart*,<sup>37</sup> Moscow's financing could not be matched by the West,<sup>38</sup> and there were few if any constraints on where India could employ its new and growing conventional arsenal. The first MiG-21 fighter aircraft from Russia arrived in India in 1964, followed by the delivery of helicopters and armor vehicles, thus marking the beginning of Russia's role as the primary supplier of military equipment to India, a position Russia still enjoys today.<sup>39</sup>

### **1971: The Third India-Pakistan War and the Decline of the U.S. Military Relationship**

The lowest point in U.S.-India military relations came in December 1971 at the end of third India-Pakistan war. The 1971 India-Pakistan war began first as a political struggle between the two wings that composed Pakistan.

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<sup>33</sup> Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defense Policy?*, 85.

<sup>34</sup> Ravi Nanda, *Evolving Indo-US Relations* (New Delhi: Lancer Books, 2004), 27.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 29.

<sup>36</sup> Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defense Policy?*, 84.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal: Direction or Drift in Defense Policy?*, 83.

<sup>39</sup> Nyrop (ed), *India A Country Study*, 515.

In the 1960s, East Pakistan was the largest provider of foreign revenue for Pakistan, producing up to 70 percent of revenue earnings through its exports of jute and tea, yet the bulk of the revenues went to West Pakistan.<sup>40</sup> As a result, East Pakistan's living standards were "abysmal", and negotiations in 1966 between the two wings of Pakistan on these issues failed to reach any agreement.<sup>41</sup> The final straw came when the head of East Pakistan's Awami League, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won the 1970 election as prime minister; the government in Islamabad refused to allow him to form a government.

Efforts to address issues raised by East Pakistan were scuttled by Mujibur in early 1971 when he declared a non-cooperation movement that closed all government and educational institutions and halted all transportation in East Pakistan. This non-cooperation was followed by demonstrations and the formation of a "parallel government" in East Pakistan.<sup>42</sup> In addition to these developments, Islamabad suspected that the 15 million independence-minded Hindus living in East Pakistan were exploiting anti-West Pakistan attitudes and the budding Bangladeshi nationalism.<sup>43</sup> On 23 March 1971, Pakistan's Republic Day, the Awami League declared "Resistance Day." It was at this point that the Pakistani Government decided it had no other option than to crush Mujibur and his Awami League "to bring law and order in the country."<sup>44</sup>

On 25 March 1971, West Pakistan deployed 90,000 army troops into East Pakistan, unleashing a campaign of terror designed to intimidate the East Pakistanis. University professors, Pakistani Army officers of East Pakistan origin and members of the Awami League were executed.<sup>45</sup> The deployed Pakistani troops engaged in large-scale looting and rape, intending to crush any resistance to Islamabad's rule. By late summer, up to 300,000 East Pakistanis had been executed.<sup>46</sup> By September 1971, over 9 million refugees had fled East Pakistan into India's state of West Bengal.<sup>47</sup> The large influx of refugees was an economic and political problem that India was ill-prepared to handle independently.

Fearing India would intervene in the conflict, on 3 December 1971 the Pakistani Air Force launched a pre-emptive strike on Indian Air Force bases in India's western state of Punjab and northern state of Kashmir. The Pakistani air strikes were ineffective, however, and India quickly launched an already mobilized military into East Pakistan.

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<sup>40</sup> James Heitzman and Robert L. Worden, eds, *Bangladesh A Country Study* (Washington DC: United States Government), 26.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>42</sup> "The Separation of East Pakistan", *Story of Pakistan*, 1 June 2003  
< <http://www.storyofpakistan.com/articletext.asp?artid=A070&Pg=4> > .

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> Dixit, *India's Foreign Policy 1947-2003*, 104.

Within 13 days, and with the participation of Bangladesh's newly organized Mukti Bahini (Freedom Army), the Pakistani Army in East Pakistan was defeated. It surrendered on 16 December 1971, and an independent Bangladesh was born.

At the start of the 1971 war, the U.S. was pursuing its recent opening with China with Pakistan's assistance. President Nixon and National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger considered the conflict in East Pakistan as a "Pakistan domestic concern" and told the U.S. bureaucracy "not to squeeze Pakistan."<sup>48</sup> The U.S. government's lenient attitude toward Pakistan, Nixon's "warm personal relationship" with Pakistan's president, along with Nixon's personal dislike for Indira Gandhi may have led to the unrealistic belief that Pakistan would receive military support from the U.S and China.<sup>49</sup>

As in the 1965 India-Pakistan war, the U.S. and China did not become involved militarily to support Pakistan. Although the U.S did send the aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal in symbolic support, it did not participate in combat operations.

The 1971 war was, at the time, the Indian military's finest hour, as they had delivered a crushing defeat to their longtime enemy. Their national pride was bruised, however, by the arrival of the *USS Enterprise*—an event that, even today, Indians recall as the low point in U.S.-Indian relations.

### **The 1990s: Two Steps Forward, One Back**

At the end of the Cold War in 1991, the relationship between Washington and New Delhi began to improve. With the U.S. as the world's sole superpower, India made building a positive relationship with Washington a top priority,<sup>50</sup> and the U.S. no longer perceived India as an ally of the Soviet Union.<sup>51</sup>

The U.S.-India military relationship was jump-started by the "Kicklighter Proposals," (named after Lieutenant General Claude M. Kicklighter, commander of the U.S. Army Pacific in 1991) which formed the foundation of today's military engagement.<sup>52</sup> The proposals established Executive Steering Groups (ESG) to increase contact between the U.S. and Indian defense services for the planning of military exercises and exchange programs.<sup>53</sup> The success of the initiative is reflected today by nearly a dozen major

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<sup>48</sup> John H. Gill, "Dissuasion and Confrontation: U.S. Policy in the Pakistan Crisis," *Strategic Insights*, Volume III, Issue 10 (October 2004) <<http://www.ccc.nps.navy.mil/si/2004/oct/gillOct04.asp>> .

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon, the Shaping of India's Foreign Policy*, (Penguin, New Delhi, 2003), 89.

<sup>51</sup> Ganguly, *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 83.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ganguly, *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* 84.

annual exchange programs and three major military exercises per year between the two nations.

In 1995 the Kicklighter Proposals were followed by the more comprehensive agreement, the “Agreed Minute,” signed by the U.S. Secretary of Defense and India’s Minister of Defense. Under the Agreed Minute, bilateral defense cooperation would be discussed and agreed to at the most senior level of both countries’ defense ministries. To this end, the Defense Policy Group was established and co-chaired by the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense and India’s Defense Secretary. The Defense Policy Group is responsible for:

- Review of joint security concerns, planning and policy.
- Policy guidance for defense research and production and the creation of the Joint Technical Group (established to oversee all joint research issues and policy).
- Agreeing to and, as required, resolving issues arising from the uniformed services Executive Steering Groups.
- Facilitating personnel exchanges and seminars on common-interest areas of security and defense policy.<sup>54</sup>

Even as the military relationship moved forward, there were disagreements. The Agreed Minute did not include arms sales to New Delhi nor the transfer of technology or co-development of technology.<sup>55</sup> The lack of defense sales and technology transfer to India was meant to shield Pakistan, who was then the primary ally of the U.S. in South Asia. New Delhi also did not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in September 1996. India perceives the CTBT as an agreement that “divides the world permanently into nuclear ‘haves and have-nots’ and more importantly, that it puts India permanently in the camp of the ‘have-nots’.”<sup>56</sup> Additionally, when the U.S. Central Command requested that U.S. military officers be allowed to attend India’s military school for high-altitude warfare on the Siachin Glacier, the requests were denied by New Delhi, as the U.S. Central Command is responsible for military relations with Pakistan and not India.<sup>57</sup>

On 11 and 13 May 1998, India conducted “Pokhran II,” a test of five nuclear devices and “blasted its way out of nuclear ambiguity,” resulting in the U.S. imposing economic sanctions on New Delhi mandated by U.S. law.<sup>58</sup> These sanctions resulted in nearly a complete halt in military cooperation. To help keep the relationship alive, the International Military Education Training program with India was allowed to

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>56</sup> Rajesh Gopalan, *India and the CTBT*, ISPG Newsletter May 1997  
< <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/ipsg/ctbt.htm> > .

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 86.



continue, but at a reduced rate of funding. Nevertheless, the 1998 sanctions halted U.S. military sales to New Delhi, which seriously affected the Indian Navy's ability to maintain its *Sea King* helicopter fleet.<sup>59</sup> The result of these sanctions was a perception in New Delhi that the U.S. was not a reliable defense supplier. This perception remains today, albeit to a lesser degree, and may yet impede U.S. sales of major weapons systems to India.

### 1999: The Kargil War

From May to July 1999, India and Pakistan fought their fourth war—a more limited one this time—in the mountains of western Kashmir. The Pakistani Army began the war in the spring by successfully infiltrating 1,500 men into Indian Army outposts, that had been vacated for the winter along the Line of Control in the Kargil area of Kashmir.<sup>60</sup> Islamabad also infiltrated equipment, supplies and war material.

Pakistan had three objectives for the incursion. They sought to cut the supply and communications link to northern Kashmir, strand the Indian Army units located there and force the GoI to negotiate a final settlement on Kashmir.<sup>61</sup>

Islamabad underestimated New Delhi's response to the Kargil incursion. The Indian Army attacked the hilltops occupied by Pakistan at great cost of lives lost and killed an estimated 700 Pakistani fighters.<sup>62</sup> Pakistan finally abandoned its remaining positions in Kargil after President Clinton intervened, pressuring Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to immediately withdraw troops from Kargil—which he did. According to U.S. Central Commander, General Zinni, there was a real possibility that Kargil was “escalating without much control.”<sup>63</sup> Indian officials and much of the Indian population were elated that the U.S. had backed New Delhi to effect a quick end to the crisis.

President Clinton's involvement prevented the war from possibly spreading out of Kashmir and growing into a larger conventional conflict, with the potential of disaster for the two nuclear-armed states. The Kargil War was perceived as a victory for India, and it was especially notable that the U.S. had given complete support to New Delhi during the crisis.

India's immense satisfaction with President Clinton's support was demonstrated by the enthusiastic welcome he received when he visited India in March 2000. Also in that year, the U.S. *National Security Strategy* stated that “we have common interest in the

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>60</sup> Mary Anne Weaver, *Pakistan in the Shadow of Jihad and Afghanistan*, (Penguin Books, India, 2002), 29.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

free flow of commerce ... through the vital sea lanes of the Indian Ocean ... we share an interest in fighting terrorism and in creating a strategically stable Asia.”<sup>64</sup> This stated view of shared concerns, coupled with a visit of India’s army chief and India’s chairman, Chiefs of Staff to Washington in November 2000, marked the beginning of a “fresh start” for military relations.<sup>65</sup>

### III. September 11, 2001 and the Renewed Military Relationship

Immediately following the terrorist attacks on the U.S. in September 2001, the GoI, then headed by Prime Minister Vajpayee, “immediately wrote to President Bush offering to be a partner in the war against terrorism and placing India’s military facilities at its (U.S.) disposal.”<sup>66</sup>

In October 2001, after the U.S. began *Operation Enduring Freedom* in Afghanistan, U.S. ships and planes regularly refueled in India. In April and September 2002, the Indian Navy sent two ships, the *INS Sukanya* and *INS Sharda*, to relieve the *USS Cowpens* of ship escort duty in the Malacca Straits as part of *Operation Enduring Freedom*.<sup>67</sup>

One result of Indian support for the U.S. after 9/11 was that the military relationship between the two countries moved into high gear, and on 27 September 2001 the U.S. Government waived sanctions against India.

The most immediate sign of change in the military relationship was demonstrated by a visit to New Delhi by the then U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld on 5 November 2001—the first visit of a U.S. Defense Secretary since 1995.<sup>68</sup> Admiral Blair, then Combatant Commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, followed with a visit. Douglas Feith, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense for Policy, followed Admiral Blair with a visit. The visits and contacts marked a rapid and dynamic change in the relationship.

The result was an accelerated growth in U.S.-India defense cooperation, initially in the areas of military exercises between the armed forces and engagement through numerous training programs and officer exchanges. These programs formed the foundation of the new defense relationship between Washington and New Delhi.

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<sup>64</sup> Ganguly, *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 88.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>66</sup> Prakash Karat, “Subordinate Ally: Implications for the Indo-US strategic Alliance,” *The Marxist* January 2006, [https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/PTARGS\\_0\\_0200\\_219\\_998-43](https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/PTARGS_0_0200_219_998-43) >.

<sup>67</sup> U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, *People, Progress, Partnership: The Transformation of U.S.-India Relations* 40.

<sup>68</sup> Sumit Ganguly, ed., *India as an Emerging Power*, (Frank Cass Publishers, London) 16.

The rapid growth in defense ties led to the signing of *The New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship* in June 2005 by the U.S. Secretary of Defense and India's Minister of Defense, then Pranab Mukherjee. *The New Framework* is an enabling document, increasing the depth and breath of U.S.-India defense ties and engagements. This agreement reflects recognition of the defense relationship as a vital part of the overall U.S.-India strategic partnership, which was defined by the *Next Steps in Strategic Partnership* initiative, launched in January 2004.

*The New Framework* states: "The U.S.-India defense relationship derives from a common belief in freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, and seeks to advance shared security interests. These interests include:

- Maintaining security and stability;
- Defeating terrorism and violent religious extremism;
- Preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and associated materials and technologies;
- Protecting the free flow of commerce via land, air and sea lanes."<sup>69</sup>

*The New Framework* seeks to expand defense trade as a means to strengthen security and increase interaction between the two armed forces. It also created the Defense Joint Working Group to conduct mid-year reviews of all work and agreements decided by the Defense Policy Group.<sup>70</sup> The role of the Defense Joint Working Group is critical to ensure agreements do not lose momentum and to address issues that arise between the yearly meetings of the Defense Policy Group.

#### IV. What Does India Seek from the U.S.?

The strategic partnership between Washington and New Delhi will likely be a unique relationship, given the interests of both countries, and will not be a traditional alliance such as the U.S. has with Britain.<sup>71</sup> For a strategic partnership that addresses national security concerns of both capitals, India expects to be an equal partner, rather than a subordinate client state to the U.S.

New Delhi's "grand strategy divides the world into three concentric circles."<sup>72</sup> The first circle is the "immediate neighborhood" where New Delhi seeks to be the dominant state and to prevent or limit the influence of "outside powers."<sup>73</sup> The second circle is India's "extended neighborhood" and is the rest of Asia and the Indian Ocean. This extended neighborhood is where New Delhi seeks "to balance the influence of

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<sup>69</sup> Embassy of India, "New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship," Press Release, 28. June, 2005 <[http://www.indianembassy.org/press\\_release/2005/June/31.htm](http://www.indianembassy.org/press_release/2005/June/31.htm)> .

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> GoI Official interviewed by the author 23 January 2007.

<sup>72</sup> C. Raja Mohan, "India and the Balance of Power," *Foreign Affairs*, July/august 2006, 18.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

other powers and prevent them from undercutting its interests.”<sup>74</sup> The third circle is the rest of the world, where India has tried to be a key player in “international peace and security.”<sup>75</sup>

New Delhi sees itself in the center of the first circle (South Asia) and seeks to play a larger role politically, economically, and militarily in the area. India’s military concerns are:

- Pakistan, India’s most immediate threat, though the current peace process has raised hopes for many on both sides of the Line of Control. Pakistan remains a threat to India, given its support of terrorist groups, its proxy war in Kashmir and its capability of “nuclear blackmail.”<sup>76</sup> Of continuing concern is that Pakistan will remain a breeding ground of terrorists, harboring between 10,000 and 40,000 madrassas (Islamic religious schools, some of which provide military training), along with numerous dedicated terrorist training camps in various parts of the country.<sup>77</sup> New Delhi seeks to have Washington pressure Pakistan to deny its support for the terrorists operating in Kashmir and, increasingly, in other parts of India.
- Defeating domestic terrorism and insurgency. New Delhi faces several terrorist threats in its northeastern states from ethnic separatist groups and from militant Islamic groups, some in both categories operating from Bangladesh. Officials in New Delhi view Bangladesh as a growing problem, as several cross-border terrorist groups operate with “complacent support” from Bangladeshi officials and, reportedly, Pakistan’s security services.<sup>78</sup>
- China, which is viewed as a long-term strategic competitor, both economically and politically. Beijing has been increasing its presence in South Asia as a major weapons supplier to and economic partner with Pakistan and Bangladesh, causing India to fear being “encircled” by Chinese-influenced states.<sup>79</sup> Beijing and New Delhi have yet to resolve the border issues in eastern Kashmir and in India’s Northeast, which were the focus of their 1962 conflict.
- Maritime security. New Delhi seeks to ensure that the sea-lanes passing through the Indian Ocean and the Malacca Straits remain free of threats from terrorists and piracy, allowing cargo and energy supplies to move freely. Any

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Brahma Chellaney, “Boost U.S.-Indian Cooperation: Block Pakistan’s Nuclear Blackmail,” *International Herald Tribune*, June 11, 2002, <[http://www.iht.com/articles/2002/06/11/edbrahma\\_ed3\\_\\_0.php](http://www.iht.com/articles/2002/06/11/edbrahma_ed3__0.php)> .

<sup>77</sup> *Pakistan: School for Terror*, *Economist*, 19 August 2006, 23.

<sup>78</sup> Ganguly, *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 167.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., xx.

disruption of sea traffic in the Indian Ocean or through the Malacca Straits would be felt throughout Asia.<sup>80</sup>

- Space. India seeks to develop aerospace security to “strengthen the international legal regime for peaceful uses of outer space.”<sup>81</sup> India was no doubt alarmed when China demonstrated its anti-satellite capability when it destroyed one of its own satellites on January 11, 2007. Indian officials believe that “the Chinese space program is primarily military in nature and it is so far ahead of India.”<sup>82</sup> Of particular concern is the security of India’s own satellites.

To meet these threats, New Delhi may look for the U.S. to act in support of India in the region as an ally when “shared values” and common interests intersect. It is critical for the success of future military operations between the U.S. and India to expand current military engagement programs, expand military training exercises and ensure commonality of military equipment. For example, the U.S. and Indian Navies worked together after the 2004 tsunami that devastated southeastern India, parts of Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia. Anti-terrorism missions are also an area of the cooperation between Washington and New Delhi, as both the U.S. and India are actively combating terrorism in the region.

For the strategic partnership to be successful, India will expect to be treated as an equal partner and, because of domestic concerns or national interest, will not always champion U.S. goals or requests for support. India currently has a coalition government and will likely have coalition governments in the future, as neither of India’s major national political parties has been able to independently gain a majority in Parliament. Political allies within the current United Progressive Alliance government will likely limit its ability to work with or support the U.S., as several Left parties—traditional ideological foes of the U.S.—help form the current government.

There will also be areas where New Delhi and Washington “agree to disagree.” For example, India is concerned about the U.S. supplying Pakistan with arms that New Delhi perceives as not required for Pakistan’s part in the war on terror. India also values its relationship with Iran, and may or may not support U.S. positions on Iran, depending on how India’s interests—particularly its energy interests—are likely to be affected. An understanding of each other’s national interests is key to ensuring realistic expectations for a military partnership.

What New Delhi seeks most from the United States is a more robust and India-friendly transfer of military technology, along with increasing purchases of U.S.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ashok Sharma, “India’s Aerospace Command,” *Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies*, 14 February 2007 <<http://www.ipcs.org/whatsNewarticle1.jsp?>> .

<sup>82</sup> Mark Sappenfield, “India Raises the Ante on its Space Program,” *Christian Science Monitor*, 11 January 2007 <<http://www.camonitor.com/2007/0111/p06s-01-wosc.html>> .

defense equipment. This desire for U.S. technology provides opportunities, but also presents some of the greatest challenges for Washington and New Delhi.

### What Does the U.S. Seek From India?

President Bush in 2001 encouraged a significant upgrading of the relationship by promoting a “strategic partnership” with India based on shared national security interests. The terrorist attacks on the U.S. in September 2001 focused U.S. attention on Afghanistan. Pakistan came to play a critical role in the U.S. response, but any U.S. military efforts in the region also needed to take into account Indian interests as a major regional power. It is important to remember that the renewed military relationship with India does not exclude Pakistan from U.S. interests in South Asia.

Washington’s security concerns with respect to South Asia are:

- Combating the spread of terrorism in South Asia from both state and non-state actors.<sup>83</sup> Afghanistan and Pakistan are the epicenter of Islamic terrorist planning and training in the region and the major priority for the U.S. government.
- Counterbalancing China’s growing influence and power in Asia. Counterbalancing China is not a “containment” policy, but an understanding that Beijing’s growing economic power is fundamentally reshaping Asia,<sup>84</sup> and could eventually threaten U.S. political influence and economic interests in the region.
- The U.S. seeks to ensure the sea-lanes from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca remain open for the movement of trade and free of interferences from piracy and terrorism. Disruption from natural disasters is also a concern.
- Containing the spread of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the region. Both India and Pakistan tested nuclear devices in May 1998, and any conventional war between New Delhi and Islamabad always has the possibility of expanding into a nuclear exchange. It is here that the U.S. can act as a stabilizing force in South Asia.

The military relationship with India complements the U.S. war on terrorism in the region. Military cooperation programs benefit the two militaries by building personal relationships and providing insights into how the other operates. Understanding the

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<sup>83</sup> Anupam Inbar, “India: Toward True Partnership,” *The Journal of International Security Affairs*, Number 11, Fall 2006, 21.

<sup>84</sup> Robert Blackwell, “Why is India America’s Natural Ally?” *The National Interest*, May 2005 <<http://www.internationalinterest.com/Articles/Mau%202005/MayBlackwillPFV.html>> .

other's operational planning and equipment facilitates interoperability in future operations.

## V. Pakistan and the U.S.-India Military Relationship

It is impossible to discuss the U.S.-Indian military relationship without considering its impact on Pakistan, which has been a steadfast U.S. ally since the mid-1950s and throughout the Cold War era. Today most senior officials in Pakistan and India understand that the United States no longer "hyphenates" India and Pakistan. Instead, U.S. strategic thinking is shaped "by an objective assessment of the intrinsic value of each country to U.S. interests rather than by fears about how U.S. relations with one would affect the other."<sup>85</sup> While the U.S. has vital interests in India, it also has vital interests in Pakistan, albeit for very different reasons.

Pakistan's leaders understand that U.S. long-term political interests in the region are not with them exclusively, but also increasingly with India. This is a bitter pill for Islamabad, who for decades worked closely with Washington to help contain a Soviet advance into South Asia and worked closely with the U.S. on regional security issues. The U.S. viewed Islamabad as a reliable ally in the region, allowing it to set up listening posts and base spy planes in Pakistan's North-West Frontier Province during the Cold War.<sup>86</sup> Islamabad was rewarded for its support with modern U.S. weapons and training for many of its military officers.

When asked during an interview with a Pakistani official how Islamabad views the U.S.-Indian relationship today, I was told, "It's as if a father had two sons. One son was loyal and the other a renegade, yet the father gives rewards to the renegade son because of his size and wealth." The official went on to say that Pakistan feels "wronged" by the U.S.-India civil nuclear deal, and that Pakistan also sought a similar type of agreement with Washington. When asked about Islamabad's nuclear proliferation, the official responded with the oft-stated position of the Pakistani government: "It was the act of an individual and not the state."

Pakistan is also concerned about the growing sales of U.S. military equipment to New Delhi. The possible sale of 126 multi-role combat aircraft to New Delhi will only "exacerbate" the military imbalance in the region in India's favor.<sup>87</sup>

The primary U.S. interest in Pakistan today is maintaining Islamabad's support for the U.S. war on terrorism and support for U.S. military operations in Afghanistan. After the September 2001 terrorist attacks, under pressure Pakistan provided the U.S.

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<sup>85</sup> Rand Corporation, "South Asia: U.S. Policy Choices," *Taking Charge, A Bipartisan Report to the President Elect on Foreign Policy and National Security-Discussion Papers*, 2001, 83. [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/MR1306.1/index.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1306.1/index.html) > .

<sup>86</sup> Ganguly, *U.S.-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 65.

<sup>87</sup> Government of Pakistan official interviewed by the author 18 December 2006.

government and military with “unprecedented levels of cooperation by allowing U.S. military to use bases within the country, helping to identify and detain extremists, and tightening the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.”<sup>88</sup>

Even so, Pakistan has become a major center of Islamic terrorism. Islamic terrorist groups operate and train in Pakistan—Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, the Taliban—either with active support from elements in the Government of Pakistan or with their knowledge and lack of interference. In addition, it is no secret that Al-Qaeda has successfully found refuge in Pakistan near the Afghanistan border.<sup>89</sup>

The U.S. cannot afford to disengage with Pakistan, as articulated by Gen. Anthony Zinni, former Commander of U.S. Central Command: “My worry is that Musharraf may be the last hope for Pakistan. The pressures he faces are extreme: the economic conditions in Pakistan, the tensions with India, the country’s relationship with the United States. If he fails in carrying out his reforms and putting Pakistan back on track, I can foresee three worst-case scenarios: the military hard-liners will take over; the religious hard-liners will take over, and we’ll see a theocracy like Iran; or Pakistan will be faced with complete chaos and fall apart. Then we’ll have another failed state in the region, like Afghanistan. And any of these scenarios will be extremely dangerous for the United States.”<sup>90</sup>

The greatest danger posed by the fall of Musharraf’s government, for the U.S. and the world, has to do with Pakistan’s nuclear weapons, should they come under the control of Al-Qaeda or any other militant Islamic entity. The U.S. cannot allow Pakistan to slip into any of the scenarios mentioned above, and U.S. national interests in Pakistan are extremely important for the stability of South Asia. In interviews with Indian Government officials, they also agreed that a failed Pakistan would be detrimental to Indian interest in the region. Having a failed or fundamentalist state on its western border would likely increase attacks in Kashmir, as the terrorists would not have any restraints on their actions or ability to train, arm, and recruit. A radical Islamic Pakistan could also threaten to radicalize India’s Muslims, the second largest Muslim population in the world.

## **VI. India’s Perception of the U.S.-Pakistan Military Relationship**

As in the U.S., Indian government officials have no desire to see Pakistan become a failed state. Such an event would bring chaos to South Asia and likely increase terrorist activity in India, as Pakistan would become a primary training ground for Islamic terrorist.<sup>91</sup> However, New Delhi is concerned about and questions the sale to Pakistan

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<sup>88</sup> K. Alan Kornstadt, “Pakistan-U.S. relations,” *CSR Issue Brief for Congress, Congressional Research Service, The Library of Congress*, October 8, 2004, 5.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Weaver, “*Pakistan in the Shadow of the Jihad and Afghanistan*,” 20.

<sup>91</sup> GoI official interviewed by the author 23 January 2007.



of certain types of U.S. military equipment the Indians deem as not being required for the global war on terrorism. During an interview with one Indian official, I was asked why the U.S. is selling P3C maritime patrol aircraft to the Pakistan Navy: “Does Al-Qaeda have a navy?” The official went on to say that India would like to see more funding spent on rebuilding institutions that would help stabilize Pakistan, such as building a viable public education system and investment in infrastructure.

When Pakistan receives modern weapons and systems from the U.S., India expects that some time in the future “Pakistan will try and box one or two weight classes up and this always leads to problems.”<sup>92</sup> Even though India enjoys a conventional superiority over Pakistan, items such as the U.S.-manufactured F-16 fighter aircraft, P3C maritime patrol aircraft, along with anti-air and anti-ship missiles will remain a concern for India’s military and government—believing that in any future conflict, these weapons will be employed against India. Weapons sales to Islamabad were suspended in 1989 under President George H. Bush when Pakistan began converting its enriched nuclear uranium into nuclear weapons.<sup>93</sup> Pakistan had by that time taken delivery on 40 F-16s, and the remaining production of 43 F-16s was halted. The Pakistan Air Force requested a total of 75 F-16s from the U.S. after 9/11, not counting the 40 fighters already in its inventory<sup>94</sup>.

In an effort to reassure New Delhi of U.S. intentions, in March 2005 President Bush called India’s Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to inform him, before the public announcement was made, of U.S. plans to sell F-16s to Pakistan. Reportedly, Prime Minister Singh complained that selling F-16s to Pakistan would shift the balance of power in South Asia.<sup>95</sup> A government spokesman stated to the press, “We’re greatly disappointed to hear the news.”<sup>96</sup> Nevertheless, the response from senior government officials to the F-16 sale was more restrained than might have been expected. The restraint shown by New Delhi may indicate India’s growing understanding that the U.S. deals with India and Pakistan as separate relationships, and does not view those relationships as a zero sum game.

However, New Delhi remains concerned about the types of weapons the U.S. is selling to Pakistan, and this concern will remain high on New Delhi’s agenda in discussions with Washington. Even if New Delhi understands U.S. support for Pakistan, they perceive a double standard. An Indian official once asked me if Musharraf has a “get-out-of-jail-for-free card.” Pointing out that Musharraf took power in a coup, and that

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<sup>92</sup> Former Indian Official’s remarks during a lecture at Johns Hopkins University 1 November 2006.

<sup>93</sup> Fred Kaplin, “The Wings of a Hawk; Why is Bush Selling F-16s to Pakistan?” *Slate*, March 30, 2005 <<http://www.slate.com/toolbar.aspx?action=print&id=2115965>> .

<sup>94</sup> Shakil Shaikh, “Pak-US Deal on 75-F-16s Soon: PAF,” *The News*, September 30, 2005 <<http://www.jang.com.pk/thenews/sep2005-daily/02-09-2005/main/main15.htm>> .

<sup>95</sup> Peter Baker, “Bush: U.S. to Sell F-16s to Pakistan,” *Washington Post*, March 26, 2005 <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A800-2005Mar25>> .

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

Pakistan harbors the Taliban and is a nuclear proliferator, the official said this seems to contradict the U.S. interests of spreading democracy, preventing proliferation of WMD technology and battling terrorism.

## VII. U.S.-Indian Military Programs

Once sanctions were waived against India in September 2001, some of the first engagement programs to be restarted or established were military engagement programs—personnel exchanges for education and training, and conferences on issues of mutual interest. These programs were the foundation for re-establishing military ties between the U.S. and Indian armed forces and have been a springboard for increasing understanding of how the two militaries operate, are equipped and train. Understanding of each other's capabilities and limitations is key to building a military relationship. Equally important is that the military engagement programs have helped build trust between the two countries.

Military engagement programs are one leg in the triad of U.S.-India military cooperation. The other two legs are military exercises and sales of U.S. military equipment. U.S.-India military exercises have also grown since 2001, from small-unit military training exercises to today's much more complex and robust training exercises. Perhaps the most recognized military exercise is the annual naval exercise *Malibar* conducted off India's west coast. Beginning in 2002 with only four service ships, today the exercise employs a dozen ships including submarines, aircraft carriers and, beginning in 2005, the participation other nations.

The sale of military equipment, however, has not grown as quickly as engagement programs and exercises. Even though U.S. defense technology is seen as the "very best" by Indians, military sales have been minimal for two primary reasons. One, U.S. defense companies have not been in the Indian arms market for nearly five decades. Today they face a market that has been dominated by other countries—Russia, Israel, France and the U.K. U.S. defense suppliers lack a history of contacts among government and military decision makers, as well as lacking an understanding of the complexities of the Indian procurement system.

Secondly, New Delhi harbors a lingering suspicion about Washington's reliability as a long-term defense supplier. As the Indian military pushes for rapid modernization, it can ill-afford to buy equipment for which service, spares and upgrades could become unavailable should Washington again choose to impose sanctions.

It is true that no one in the U.S. government can give India an ironclad guarantee against future sanctions—especially in the event of India testing nuclear devices. However, it can be impressed upon Indian decision makers at all levels that the defense supply relationship not only benefits India, but also the U.S. The closer this relationship becomes, the higher the cost will be for the U.S. to impose sanctions.

Viewing the military relationship as a “crawl, walk, run” process, we have moved from the crawl phase beginning in September 2001 to a walk phase in 2006, with the sale and transfer of the *USS Trenton*, a landing platform dock (LPD) ship. The *Trenton* carries a crew of 24 officers and 396 enlisted sailors and can transport and deliver approximately 900 marines, 24 amphibious assault vehicles and accommodate six CH-46 helicopters.<sup>97</sup> The *USS Trenton* is also ideal for disaster relief operations as it can quickly transport troops and helicopters to support civilian officials in relief operations.

To reach the run phase, the U.S. Government will have to continue to show and reassure New Delhi of its intention to develop a long-term relationship. This may best be done by the sale of a major weapons system, in addition to increasing engagement programs and exercises. Success in these areas will help ensure the military relationship continues for the next 20-25 years.

With the programs below, the U.S. Government has done much to allay New Delhi’s concerns about U.S. reliability, but there is still “no margin for error”<sup>98</sup> on building trust with India.

### **U.S. Engagement Programs with India**

U.S. programs currently underway with India are as follows:

**International Military Education and Training (IMET):** IMET is a U.S. Department of State program overseen and executed by the U.S. Department of Defense. The program sends qualified Indian military officers and noncommissioned officers to attend U.S. military schools. The IMET program is highly respected by India’s uniformed services, and only the best and brightest from India’s officer corps are sent to attend U.S. military courses. The FY 2005 budget for India’s participation in IMET was \$1.4M, which sent approximately 45 Indian officers to the U.S. for military training and education.<sup>99</sup>

**Counter-Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP):** CTFP is a U.S. Department of Defense program designed to educate Indian military officers as part of the U.S. global war on terrorism. Only Indian military personnel that are assigned to or participate in counter-terrorism units can utilize this program. In addition to sending selected military personnel to the U.S. for counter-terrorism training, this funding also

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<sup>97</sup> “USS Trenton (LPD 14),” Decommissioned, *Navy Site*, 26 April 2007  
<<http://navysite.de/ships/lpd14.htm>> .

<sup>98</sup> U.S. Government Official interviewed by the author 16 November 2006.

<sup>99</sup> Greg Winston, “Defense Cooperation with India - Expanding Again,” *The DISAM Journal* VOL. 27 NO. 4 (Summer 2005):8.

supports mobile training teams sent to India from the U.S. to train their counterparts on various issues related to counter-terrorism activities.<sup>100</sup>

As part of the CTFP, the U.S. Coast Guard in April 2005 conducted Port Security training in Mumbai for 25 Indian Navy personnel. In September 2005, a Surgical Trauma Response Techniques Mobile Training Team (MTT) was conducted in New Delhi for about 35 Indian military doctors, and that same month a Cyber Terrorism MTT was held in New Delhi for 40 Indian officials and military personnel.

**HIV/AIDS Grant:** U.S. Pacific Command's (USPACOM) Center of Excellence oversees a \$600K grant (in FY 05) for use by India's Armed Forces Medical Services to test for and educate its personnel on HIV/AIDS.<sup>101</sup> India's military has the required number of doctors, nurses, lab technicians and counselors for its military AIDS awareness programs, and the HIV/AIDS grant augments its laboratories for purchase of equipment and test kits used in testing military personnel for HIV. The U.S. Army Pacific and India's Armed Forces Medical Services co-host an annual HIV/AIDS conference at various locations throughout India in an effort to heighten awareness of this pandemic. India's military has adopted a very aggressive program to screen new recruits and has educated its military on all aspects of the HIV virus.<sup>102</sup>

**Aviation Leadership Program (ALP):** The ALP is a U.S. Air Force program that trains one Indian Air Force flight lieutenant on basic pilot training, which results in the Indian flight lieutenant receiving his basic flying wings for the U.S. Air Force's T-38 aircraft. To date the Indian Air Force has sent one officer every other year or every third year to the U.S. for this training.<sup>103</sup>

**Title 10 Conferences:** Title Ten Conferences are funded by the U.S. Department of Defense to send qualified Indian military personnel to various conferences focusing on military issues ranging from submarine rescue to avian flu to air traffic control. The subjects and locations of Title 10 events vary and are held in various locations worldwide. India's military is very active in this program.<sup>104</sup>

**Foreign Military Sale (FMS) Seminars:** An important part of the growing military relationship, FMS seminars were started after sanctions were waived in 2001 to increase understanding of how the U.S. Government exports and accounts for sensitive technologies and equipment. The most recent seminar was held in New Delhi in September 2004 for 40 officials and officers from India's Ministry of Defense. These

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Winston, "Defense Cooperation with India - Expanding Again," *The DISAM Journal* 9.

<sup>102</sup> U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, "Indo-U.S. Workshop in New Delhi to Train Indian Armed Forces' Peer Leaders on HIV/AIDS," *Press Release 2005*, 29 April 2005, <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/utills/eprintpage.html> > .

<sup>103</sup> U.S. Government official interviewed by the author 16 November 2006.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

FMS seminars have been well received by the Indian military and are of critical importance as the U.S. begins to offer military equipment to India.

**Enhanced International Peacekeeping Capabilities (EPIC) Grant:** The EPIC began in August 2002 with an \$800K budget, and will expire in 2007.<sup>105</sup> The grant provides India with equipment (computers, printers, LAN systems, software) to support peacekeeping-operations training conducted at India's Unified Services Institute in New Delhi. This grant also supports *Shanti Path*, the annual U.S.-Indian peacekeeping exercise that includes military personnel from South and Southeast Asia as well as U.S. and Indian officers and officials. India's currently constructing a new building to house its peacekeeping center.

### **Other Conferences and Events**

In addition to the engagement programs listed above, 40 Indian military officers and Indian civilian acquisition managers participated in a U.S. Navy-led Acquisition Resource Management Program, held in New Delhi in September 2005.<sup>106</sup>

In FY 2005, 150 India military officers and officials from India's MoD participated in seminars or conferences at Asia Pacific Center for Strategic Studies in Honolulu; the Near East South Asia Center in Washington D.C. and the Pacific Area Management Seminar annually held in different locations throughout Asia.<sup>107</sup> As with other engagement programs, these conferences help build greater understanding between U.S. and Indian personnel as well as new personal contacts, thereby developing and deepening the military relationship.

### **India's Engagement Programs with the U.S.**

India's MoD also opened its military schools for U.S. military personnel to attend, as follows:

**Defense Service Staff College (DSSC):** DSSC is equivalent to the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College. Every academic year, two U.S. military officers of the rank of major/lieutenant commander attend DSSC in Wellington, Tamil Nadu. Only the top 20 percent of India's military officers attend DSSC, which means the U.S. officers at DSSC meet the best and brightest of India's officers. Many of the Indian officers who attend DSSC will attain senior ranks.

**Defense Service College (DSC):** DSC is comparable to the U.S. War Colleges and is located in New Delhi. As with DSSC, only India's top officers are selected for this 12-month program. The U.S. sends one colonel/navy captain every year.

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<sup>105</sup> Winston, "Defense Cooperation with India-Expanding Again," *The DISAM Journal* 9.

<sup>106</sup> GoI official interviewed by the author 23 January 2007.

<sup>107</sup> U.S. Government employee interviewed by the author 16 November 2006.

**Counter Insurgency Jungle Warfare School (CIJWS):** CIJWS is located in India's northeastern state of Mizoram. The U.S. Army sends 4 to 6 captains to this school every year. Each course is six weeks in length and has both classroom and field exercises focusing on counter-insurgency operations and training.

### **Engagement Programs: The Way Forward**

**IMET:** To ensure that the U.S.-India military relationship continues to expand, the IMET program should be increased to \$2M per year, which would permit about 60 Indian military officers to attend U.S. military schools. The value of the IMET program cannot be overstated. India's Ministry of Defense is very keen on this program and would send more of its officers to the U.S. for training if the IMET budget allowed.

Personal contacts are crucial for success in India. The IMET program plays an important role in building relationships, trust and understanding. The Indian officers attending U.S. military schools under the IMET program will attain senior rank in the Indian military and will be in the position to increase cooperation with the U.S. by knowing and understanding U.S. tactics, equipment and goals. At some point in the future, it is possible U.S. and Indian military forces will conduct joint combat operations, during which the value of IMET officers cannot be overestimated.

**Counter-Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP):** The CTFP program is currently (FY 06) funded at \$200K per year and should be increased to \$400K per year. As with the IMET program, India's military only sends its best and brightest to U.S. military schools. All Indian personnel sent for training under the CTFP are involved in counter-terrorist operations in India. Since India has been fighting Islamic terrorists mostly in Kashmir since 1991, the Indian military has much expertise in this area and can both offer and receive lessons learned as part of the global war on terrorism.

**HIV/AIDS Grant:** This grant should remain at the same level of funding until 2013 by which time the Indian military will likely have enough laboratory equipment for testing HIV. The annual co-hosted HIV/AIDS Peer Counseling Seminars, sponsored by the U.S. Pacific Command's Center of Excellence and the Indian military's Armed Forces Medical Services, should continue beyond the end of the decade. In India, as well as the rest of the world, AIDS is not only a health problem, but also a security issue affecting the readiness and strength of military personnel. The Indian military's aggressive program reflects a change in its attitude on battling this pandemic. In 2002 there was little or no acknowledgment of HIV/AIDS, yet today the military's HIV/AIDS testing and education programs have the support of the most-senior military officers.

**Aviation Leadership Program (ALP):** The ALP program should be increased to send an Indian flight lieutenant for the program every year. The Indian Air Force is keen on the program and would support sending an officer annually. In addition, by exposing Indian officers to U.S. aircraft, their value to interoperability is enhanced. As these officers reach senior levels, their experience with U.S. equipment might also have a positive impact on potential sales of U.S. equipment to India.

**Title 10 Conferences:** The Title 10 Conferences should remain at the current level of funding and participation. India's Ministry of Defense actively participates in the funded invitations and will continue to support this valuable program.

**FMS Seminars:** The FMS seminars are an important engagement program for Indian government officials to gain a better understanding of the complex rules and regulations for the export of U.S. military equipment and technology. With the pending release of the tender for 126 multi-role combat aircraft and other major weapon systems, the FMS seminars are even more timely. FMS seminars may be required annually (rather than every other year) as the U.S. seeks to sell more defense hardware to India.

**EPIC Grant:** India's EPIC grant will end in FY 2007 and, lacking a requirement for additional funding from the GoI, no additional funds will be allocated to New Delhi. Even so, the annual Peacekeeping exercise *Shanti Path*, co-hosted by the U.S. Army Pacific and the Indian Army, should continue on a yearly basis.

### **Building on Success: Recommended New Engagement Programs**

To ensure military engagement continues to expand and is beneficial to both countries, new engagement programs should be facilitated. The programs listed below are recommended as a starting point:

**Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) Academy:** Due to cultural differences between the U.S. and India, the roles of NCOs vary greatly. Exchange programs could begin with visits to each other's NCO academies and could grow into an exchange of instructors and students at various NCO academies.

As with the IMET program understanding U.S. military tactics, doctrine and equipment is imperative for successful military interoperability. This exchange could expand the roles of NCOs in India and give both sides a greater understanding of the other's capabilities, training and limitations.

**Instructor Exchange:** For several years, the U.S. and Indian staff colleges have discussed a Memorandum of Agreement for an officer instructor exchange (at the rank of colonel) between the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College and India's

Defense Service Staff College. The implementation of this exchange will likely linger for several more years, unless it is agreed to by the Defense Policy Group.

### VIII. U.S.-India Government Bilateral Meetings

An important aspect of the U.S.-India relationship restarted after September 2001 with bilateral meetings held annually (or semiannually on specific issues) to exchange information, ideas and agreements. The primary bilateral meeting is the Defense Policy Group that oversees all other bilateral groups and is the final approving authority on all agreements and arrangements made by the other military bilateral groups.

**Defense Policy Group (DPG):** The DPG is co-chaired by the U.S. Undersecretary of Defense for Policy and India's Defense Secretary. The DPG is the "inter-governmental body"<sup>108</sup> linking the U.S. Department of Defense and India's Ministry of Defense and "is the primary mechanism to guide the U.S.-India strategic defense relationship."<sup>109</sup> The DPG oversees several sub-groups: the Defense Procurement and Production Group; Military Cooperation Group; Senior Technology Security Group; and the Joint Technical Group. The DPG finalizes training programs and agreements for the upcoming year and meets once a year alternating between the United States and India.

**The Defense Joint Working Group (DJWG):** Is the latest of the sub-groups and meets at least once a year to oversee all projects and agreements of the other sub-groups. Results and findings of the DJWG are presented during the annual DPG.<sup>110</sup>

**Defense Procurement and Production Group (DPPG):** The DPPG meets twice a year, rotating between Washington and New Delhi, to discuss Foreign Military Sales and both U.S. and Indian procurement rules and regulations. It also discusses transfer of technology and issues concerning co-production and export of military equipment.<sup>111</sup> The two co-chairs are the U.S. Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency and India's Director General for Acquisitions. The DPPG is critical if the U.S. is to become a major defense supplier to India.<sup>112</sup>

**Military Steering Groups (MSG):** Army, navy and air force officers from the U.S. and India meet once a year to finalize plans for the next year in the areas of training and engagement programs. Once both sides agree, the information is forwarded to the Defense Policy Group for final approval.

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<sup>108</sup> Ganguly, *US-Indian Strategic Cooperation into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 84.

<sup>109</sup> U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, "The Defense Framework," Press Release, 28 June 2005 <<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/ipr062805.html>>.

<sup>110</sup> U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, "The Defense Framework," 3.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> U.S. Government Official interviewed by the author 12 December 2006.



**Senior Technology Security Group (STSG):** The STSG is held annually. The two co-chairs are the Director, Defense Threat Security Agency and India's Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defense. The annual meetings rotate between Washington and New Delhi. The STSG meetings are important for approving the export of U.S. weapons and defense technology and ensuring any technology transferred to India is not compromised.

**Joint Technical Group (JTG):** The JTG is co-chaired by the U.S. Director International Cooperation and India's Chief Controller, Research and Development. The JTG meets once a year, alternating between Washington and New Delhi.<sup>113</sup> The JTG is responsible for facilitating and implementing agreements and research between the U.S. Department of Defense's Acquisitions, Technology and Logistics (AT&L) and India's Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO). Significant agreements signed since 2001 for enabling the U.S. and India to work together are as follows:

- General Security of Military Information (GSOMIA) was signed in December 2001, and is the foundation document for protection of information shared between AT&L and DRDO.<sup>114</sup>
- The Master Information Exchange Agreement (MIEA) signed in February 2004. The MIEA has led to two Information Exchange Agreements (IAs) being signed between AT&L and DRDO in the area of Life Sciences for War Fighter Protection, and Performance Enhancement.<sup>115</sup>
- Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation (RDT&E) agreement was signed January 2006, and two Project Agreements (PAs) in the Life Sciences are under discussion.<sup>116</sup>

The signing of the GSOMIA, MIEA, and the RDT&E are the first and most important steps to bringing meaningful research between the governments of the U.S. and India. The next step is implementing the IAs and PAs—critical for the success of the DCA program. Of all the ongoing U.S.-India bilateral programs, the DCA program is among the most important, as once the program matures and the IAs and PAs are implemented, ties between AT&L and India's DRDO will be established for the long term.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> U.S. Government Official interviewed by the author 15 December 2006.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

## IX. U.S.-India Military Training Exercises

In addition to engagement programs, the U.S. and Indian militaries began a series of military exercises after September 11, 2001, which have since grown in complexity and in the number and types of equipment employed. These military exercises are important to help promote interoperability and understanding between the two militaries in the growing strategic partnership between Washington and New Delhi.

The first military exercise post 9/11 was the naval exercise *Malabar*, held September–October 2002 off the western coast of India in the Arabian Sea. *Malabar* is now an annual naval exercise that increases in complexity every year, with more ships and more-challenging missions. In 2002 the exercise consisted of four surface ships and one submarine.<sup>118</sup> By *Malabar* 2005 the sea exercise involved 9,000 sailors, 12 ships and 100 naval aircraft from the U.S. aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz* and India's carrier the *INS Virat*.<sup>119</sup>

The latest and most complex *Malabar* naval exercise (at this writing) was held in October 2006. For the first time, a U.S. Navy expeditionary strike group participated in the exercise totaling 6,500 U.S. Navy personnel and including approximately 150 U.S. Marines. One Canadian ship also participated with the Indian Navy, which fielded missile frigates, submarines, aircraft and Indian soldiers from the Army's Sikh Light Infantry.<sup>120</sup> The U.S. Marines and Sikh Light Infantry practiced attacking shore targets near Goa.<sup>121</sup>

The two air forces have also seen their joint military exercises expand in number, types of aircraft and complexity since military relations were renewed. The first air exercise held in Agra was *Cope India 02*, an air mobility exercise to “develop a base line for interoperability” for dropping of paratroops and heavy equipment.<sup>122</sup> In 2004 *Cope India* at Indian Air Force base Gwalior, the complexity of the air exercises increased with eight F-15 fighters participating in dissimilar air combat exercises against fighters from the Indian Air Force. *Cope India 06* continued to build on past air combat exercises, pitting 12 U.S. F-16 fighters against India's most advanced aircraft, the

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<sup>118</sup> U.S. Embassy, New Delhi, *People Progress Partnership The transformation of U.S.-India Relations* (Thompson Press: Faridabad, India, 2005), 43.

<sup>119</sup> Scott Williams, “American, Indian Navies Demonstrate Sea Partnership during Malabar '05,” *News Article Archive*, September 29, 2005 <<http://www.c7f.navy.mil/news/2005/september/22a.htm>> .

<sup>120</sup> “India US Conduct Joint Military Exercises,” *PTI News Agency*, 27 October <2006, [http://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_0\\_200\\_219\\_51\\_42](http://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_219_51_42)> .

<sup>121</sup> Sujan Dutta, “U.S. War Games Shift to Offensive Gear,” *The Telegraph* 27 October 2006, <[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1061027/asp/nation/story\\_6922539.asp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1061027/asp/nation/story_6922539.asp)> .

<sup>122</sup> U. S. Embassy, New Delhi, *People Progress Partnership The Transformation of U.S.-India Relations*, 43.

Russian designed Su-30MKI fighter, along with India's Mig-21s, MiG-29s and Mirage 2000s.<sup>123</sup> This exercise saw the largest U.S. Air Force participation to date.

The two armies have also conducted exercises, beginning in May 2002 when U.S. and Indian Special Forces conducted a parachute operation in Agra.<sup>124</sup> That exercise was quickly followed by India deploying 80 paratroopers to Alaska in September 2002 for the first-ever live-fire exercise with U.S. soldiers.<sup>125</sup> Army exercises grew in scope with the U.S. Army deploying 60 soldiers to India's Counter Insurgency Jungle Warfare School in March 2004. Named *Exercise Vajrapahar*, it was designed to increase interoperability between the two armies by focusing on counter-insurgency warfare techniques, operations, training and equipment.<sup>126</sup> In 2006 the Indian Army participated in the largest exercise to date with the U.S. Army, sending 140 soldiers to Hawaii for exercise *Yuda Abhyas 06-02*.<sup>127</sup> This exercise focused on counter-insurgency operations in an urban environment and conducting live-fire exercises.

The growth and complexity of U.S. military exercises with India contributes to increasing interoperability between the two militaries. It is very possible that over the next five years, U.S. and Indian military forces will participate together in some type of military action. Most likely it will be a disaster relief operation as happened in 2004 after a tsunami destroyed the coastlines of countries in South and Southeast Asia. A more distant, but not unlikely scenario would be a joint counter-terrorism mission at sea or on land. The understandings garnered from exercises are critical to ensure success in planning and execution of these missions. To continue to hone the skills of both militaries, exercises should continue to increase in scope and size.

### The Way Forward for U.S.-India Training Exercises

**Joint Exercises:** Military exercises between the U.S. and Indian forces should continue on a yearly basis. Additionally, once every three years there should be a joint exercise that would be planned and executed by the U.S. Joint Staff and India's Integrated Defense Staff (IDS). Currently India's IDS does not have the same authority and responsibility as the U.S. Joint Staff, though the Indian military has placed a priority on expanding IDS responsibilities. By jointly planning and executing combined military exercises with India, the U.S. can share best practices and lessons learned.

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<sup>123</sup> Jennifer H. Svan, "Cope India' 06: Fast-Paced and Full of Firsts", *Stars and Stripes* (Pacific Edition), 17 November 2005

< <http://www.estripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=32230&archive=true> > .

<sup>124</sup> U.S. Embassy, India, *People Progress Partnership, The Transformation of U.S.-India Relations* 40.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Nimalya Banerjee, "Joint U.S. India Army Exercise in Mizoram," *The Times of India*, 23 March 2004, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/577610.cms>.

<sup>127</sup> "India, U.S. Begin Counter-Insurgency Exercise" *The Times of India*, 6 September 2006, < <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1963696.cms> > .

**Pilot Exchange:** To expand on military training, the U.S. and India should consider assigning pilots to a 12- to 24-month exchange program at the squadron level to each other's air force and navy. This type of exchange program would help expand the understanding of the other's operations, planning, tactics and procedures<sup>128</sup>. Of course, combat operations would not be part of the exchange.

**Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA):** Currently the U.S. and India do not have a Status of Forces Agreement. As military exchanges and exercises continue to expand and with more port visits, it is imperative to have an agreement in place defining the legal authority and status of military personnel operating and training in the other's country.

**Logistical Support Agreement:** The U.S. and India have been working on a logistical agreement to support each other's military forces with fuel, repairs and spare parts.<sup>129</sup> Finalizing this agreement is imperative, as military exercises continue on a regular basis and for possible future military operations that would involve U.S. and Indian militaries—peacekeeping operations, disaster relief, sea-lane protection, counter-terrorism operations, etc.

**Ship Repair Facilities:** Because of India's location on the Arabian Sea, Indian Navy ports at Mumbai and Kochi could be used for repairing U.S. navy ships. To be successful, it might be necessary to transfer some technology to India to ensure all required repairs and maintenance could be completed in India<sup>130</sup>. It is important to note that this would be a maintenance facility and not a U.S. Naval base, as the GoI is not likely to allow U.S. ships or military personnel (or any country's military) to be permanently based in India.

**Rest and Relaxation (R&R) Location:** A major port city of India could be considered as a possible R&R port for U.S. sailors and marines. To date there have been numerous ship visits to India, and these could be expanded as locations for R&R.

## **X. Weapons Sales: Cementing the Military Relationship**

The U.S. military now enjoys a unique relationship with a robust set of engagement programs and military exercises. Still, Washington has yet to become a major weapons supplier to India. U.S. sales of military articles, services, and combat systems to New Delhi are important to guarantee the strategic partnership for the next 20-25 years and to help resolve the issue of New Delhi's concerns about U.S. reliability.

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<sup>128</sup> U.S. Air Force Officer interviewed by the author 16 November 2006.

<sup>129</sup> *Transcript: U.S.-India Agreement*, BBC News, 2 March 2006  
<[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4766256.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4766256.stm)>.

<sup>130</sup> U.S. Navy officer interviewed by the author 11 January 2007.

U.S. arms sales to India have historically been limited. Having been mostly absent from the Indian arms market for five decades, the U.S. will face major challenges to become a primary weapons supplier to India. Since the mid-1960s, Russia has been India's foremost weapons supplier, with average annual sales of \$1.5 billion, followed by Israel with annual arms sales averaging \$1 billion since 2002.<sup>131</sup> Over the next 10 years, India will implement modernization programs for all three armed services, spending an estimated \$10 billion dollars yearly from 2007 through 2012.<sup>132</sup>

The next five years will present the U.S. with many opportunities to break into India's arms market, especially since Congress passed the civil nuclear deal—an important step in the U.S.-Indian relationship. Although not directly related to the military relationship, the importance of Congress passing the civil nuclear agreement cannot be underestimated. One Indian official told me that if the nuclear deal had not been approved, it would have been a “show stopper” for U.S.-Indian relations. Now that the nuclear deal has passed Congress, an indirect result is that New Delhi will be under pressure to reciprocate, possibly by purchasing U.S. military equipment.

### **Export Requirements**

The current U.S. export licensing process does not match India's procurement cycle. Finding a way to better synchronize U.S. and Indian procurement and export procedures will be high on both nations' lists of issues to resolve as part of the expanding military relationship.

New Delhi sees the U.S. export licensing procedures as an “ad hoc system that depends too much on personalities.”<sup>133</sup> New Delhi's concern is that the personality-based relationship is not sustainable over the long term. One Indian official I spoke with suggested modifying the U.S.'s current export process to be able to better meet India's procurement cycle. The official suggested that U.S. companies could pre-clear export licenses in anticipation of a Request for Proposal from India's Ministry of Defense. The problem with this concept is that export licenses are a matter of U.S. law set by Congress, and it is very unlikely that the current export license regime could be tailored with an India-specific set of rules.

Another export requirement facing Washington and New Delhi are “End Use Monitoring” (EUM) requirements for military equipment sold to countries friendly to the U.S. The Arms Export Control Act and Foreign Assistance Act require that exported U.S. military equipment is used for its stated purpose, and the U.S. Government has the right to physically inspect exported items in the purchasing country.

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<sup>131</sup> Siddharth Srivastava, “New Delhi's Voracious Appetite for Arms,” *Asia Times Online*, January 5, 2007, <<http://ad.doubleclick.net/net/adi/N553.Tribal/B2227573.14;sz=120x600;click>> .

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> GoI official interviewed by the author on 23 January 2007.

EUM has not been a point of contention with India until recently when, in relation to a possible large purchase, Indian Government officials raised strong objections to EUM. Even though government officials in New Delhi understand that EUM is a U.S. Government requirement, none of India's current providers of military hardware requires any type of EUM—so why does the U.S.?<sup>134</sup> Indian officials have pointed out that New Delhi has never “mixed” Russian and Israeli technologies, the two largest suppliers of military equipment to India, and would safeguard all U.S. technology transfers to India.<sup>135</sup> India, however, has no strong objection to EUM dual-use technology, which even New Delhi wants to ensure is not used for other-than-intended purposes.<sup>136</sup>

When I spoke with a U.S. Government official about this issue, I was told that EUM is a mandatory requirement for all countries purchasing U.S. equipment, including our closest allies. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the requirements for EUM can be modified to meet New Delhi's desires. This subject will likely be the topic of intense discussion in the coming months, especially once the tender for the purchase of 126 multi-role combat aircraft is released, as well as for any other defense items India hopes to purchase. EUM may prove to be a limiting factor in U.S. arms sales to India.

### **Recent Military Sales to India**

To date military sales to India have mostly been niche items. The overview below is not an exhaustive list of military sales to India since September 2001, but a snapshot of what has been accomplished.

#### **Indian Army**

- **Counter-Battery Radars (AN/TPQ Firefinder):** In 2002 the Indian Army leased two Firefinder radars and purchased 12 additional radars.<sup>137</sup> The first two leased radars arrived in India in 2003—the first Foreign Military Sale to India after sanctions were waived.
- **Special Force Equipment:** The purchase of Special Forces equipment, as part of the Indian Army's effort to upgrade its Special Forces units, is pending and could be completed by late 2007.<sup>138</sup>

#### **Indian Navy**

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Winston, “Defense Cooperation with India-Expanding Again,” *The DISAM Journal*: 9.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

- **U.S. Navy Landing Platform Dock (LPD) ship:** In July 2006 the GoI signed a Letter of Agreement for the purchase of the *USS Trenton*. Transfer of this ship is scheduled to be completed in April 2007.<sup>139</sup> The *USS Trenton* (LPD) will be re-christened the *INS Jalashva* and is designed to carry helicopters and landing equipment to put troops ashore from the ship. This type of ship was required during India's tsunami relief operations in 2004, and is the first ship transfer to India from the U.S. since the waiving of sanctions. The Indian Navy will also likely purchase six Sea King helicopters from the U.S. Navy for use on the *INS Jalashva*.<sup>140</sup>
- **Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle (DSRV):** This program began prior to sanctions in May 1998 and restarted in 2001. The DSRV program will modify some of India's submarines to allow a U.S. Navy rescue vehicle to extract the crew from a submerged and disabled submarine.<sup>141</sup>
- **Sea King Helicopters (H3) Spares:** The purchase of spares for Indian Navy H3 helicopters was one of the first Letters of Agreement signed by Washington and New Delhi after waiver of sanctions in September 2001. The H3 helicopters were the "poster child" of India's concern about U.S. reliability over the long term.
- **Pilot Training for Carrier Operations:** In 2005 the India Navy purchased seats at the U.S. Navy's pilot training facility in Florida. India will send about 32 of its naval aviators to train on carrier operations and landings. These Indian Navy pilots will be the core group of aviators for India's recently purchased *Admiral Groshkov* aircraft carrier from Russia.<sup>142</sup>

## Indian Air Force

- **Self Protective Suite (SPS):** The GoI purchased Boeing Business Jets (BBJ) in 2005 to use as its "Air Force One" type aircraft for transporting senior Indian government officials.<sup>143</sup> The purchase of the BBJs included the SPS system for protection of the aircraft.

<sup>139</sup> U.S. Government Official interviewed by the author 12 December 2006.

<sup>140</sup> "U.S. for Scaling up Military Ties," *The Tribune*, 16 November 2006.

<sup>141</sup> Special Correspondent, "U.S. Navy to Come to the Aid of Indian Submarines in Distress," *The Hindu*, < 23 March 2005 <http://www.thehindu.com/2005/03/23/stories/2005032303021300.htm> > .

<sup>142</sup> "In addition to F-18 Boeing Offers India Hawk for IAF, Goshawk for Navy, *India Daily*, 29 May 2006 < <http://www.indiadaily.com/editioial/9220.asp> > .

<sup>143</sup> "Govt to Buy Boeing Business Jets for VVIP Travel, *Business Line*, 7 September 2005 < <http://www.blonnet.com/2005/09/07/stories/2005090702160300.htm> > .

- **Jet Engines:** The Indian Air Force will purchase 20 indigenously manufactured *Tejas* fighter aircraft from India's Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) once testing of the aircraft is complete. The *Tejas* fighters are powered by General Electric's (GE) 404-f jet engines and HAL has agreed to buy 40 of the GE 404-f engines in addition to 11 GE 404-f engines already contracted for before sanctions in 1998.<sup>144</sup>

### The Way Ahead: Possible Military Sales to India

Even though U.S. military equipment sales to India have been modest—about \$300 million since 2001—there are several opportunities for increasing the U.S. share of military sales to India.<sup>145</sup>

Listed below are several possible “big ticket” items for near-term military sales to the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force. The list of other arms sales will continue to expand over the coming years.

- **126 Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MRCA):** The GoI is expected to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the purchase of 126 multi-role combat aircraft in the near future—exact date remains unclear, but perhaps in 2007. The U.S. Government and U.S. defense contractors will participate in this RFP by offering India the F-16 and F-18 multi-role combat aircraft. Russia, France and Sweden will also aggressively participate in the competition, as the deal is estimated to be worth \$6.5 billion.<sup>146</sup> An Indian decision to purchase U.S. MRCAs would be a very positive indication of the future of the U.S.-Indian partnership.

The best case for the United States is to win the contract for all 126 aircraft. As the GoI continues to question U.S. long-term reliability, however, I believe a more likely scenario would be the purchase of 40 (or so) U.S. fighters to equip two Indian Air Force squadrons. Such a decision would allow New Delhi to show support for the growing U.S. relationship while minimizing the risk at some point in the future of being unable to attain spares or upgrades.

The worst-case scenario would be for New Delhi not to purchase any U.S. fighters, forgoing an opportunity to further develop the military/strategic relationship in order to get predictable after-sale support from another supplier.

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<sup>144</sup> “IAF to Buy 40 Tejas Aircraft,” *The Hindu*, 2 November 2005.

< <http://www.thehindu.com/2005/02/11/stories/2005021107091200.htm> > .

<sup>145</sup> Siddharth Srivastava, “New Delhi’s Voracious Appetite for Arms,” *Asia Times*, 5 January 2007 [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/IA05Df05.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/IA05Df05.html) > .

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*



Even though Washington has done much to alleviate New Delhi's concerns about reliability of supply, the U.S. share of the fighter deal will be an important indicator of New Delhi's confidence in the U.S. As importantly, U.S. defense contractors see the fighter sale as a bellwether on how serious New Delhi is about purchasing U.S. defense equipment in general. If the sale doesn't succeed, they are likely to scale back expectations (and operations) in India, perhaps affecting all future potential for U.S. military sales.

- **T-45C Goshawk Jet Trainer:** The Indian Navy could require up to 11 of these aircraft to train naval aviators for carrier landings once the Russian aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* has completed refurbishment for the Indian Navy<sup>147</sup>. (Currently, selected Indian Navy pilots are attending the U.S. Navy's carrier landing school in Pensacola, Florida where they are flying U.S. manufactured *Goshawk* aircraft.)
- **MH-60R Seahawk Helicopters:** In January 2005 the Indian Navy released a RFP for the purchase of 16 helicopters to replace *Sea King* helicopters (H3) currently in use.<sup>148</sup> The U.S. will likely compete against several European countries for this sale.
- **E2C Hawkeye aircraft:** The Indian Navy has shown interest in acquiring an airborne early warning and control aircraft to be used on the *Admiral Gorshkov*. The Indian Navy could purchase three to six of these planes, however, it is unclear whether the carrier can accommodate the *Hawkeye* for takeoffs and landings.<sup>149</sup> Even if not usable on the carrier, India's former navy chief believes they can be utilized from shore bases.<sup>150</sup>
- **Bell 407 Helicopters:** Bell helicopter is currently competing against France to replace 197 of the Indian Army's ageing scout helicopters.<sup>151</sup> The technical evaluations and field trials are complete, and later in 2007 the Indian Government will likely announce the winner of this tender. The selection of a U.S. company, assuming it meets the army's technical and financial requirements, would signal that New Delhi is comfortable dealing with the U.S. and has confidence in the U.S. government as a reliable defense supplier.
- **C-130J Aircraft:** The Air Force is interested in purchasing six C-130J transport planes and is currently in talks with the U.S. Air Force and Lockheed Martin.

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<sup>147</sup> Prasun K. Sengupta, "American Platter: US Keen to Capture 30 Percent of India Military Hardware Market," *Force Magazine*, March 2005, 36.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> U.S. businessman interviewed by the author 8 January 2007.

It is possible that India will buy a total of 12 to 13 C-130s over the next decade.<sup>152</sup>

- ***Patriot PAC III***: Indian officials and military officers received a classified briefing on the Patriot PAC III anti-air and anti-missile system from U.S. officials in 2005. The classified briefing “is part of the U.S. commitment to develop a strategic partnership with India and sharing classified details of the Patriot missile system is one of its elements.”<sup>153</sup> Since New Delhi does not currently have a system comparable to the PAC III, it is interested in its capabilities as several large cities in northern India are unprotected and in range of Pakistani missiles.

## XI. Leveraging Military Sales to Expand Bilateral Relations

The sale of military equipment to India is part of a long-term commitment to building the military and political relationship. India’s munitions factories, production facilities, and research and development centers for military items are government controlled and, as a government monopoly, are extremely inefficient. As India continues to strive toward independence in weapons manufacturing, it is seeking the transfer of technology and co-production to modernize its defense production system. While its indigenously developed weapons have fared poorly, New Delhi has had more success with co-production of major weapons systems.

In 1958 India established the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), its prime research and development center, which today has 51 research centers and an annual budget of about \$880 million.<sup>154</sup> Yet after decades of work, India is struggling to design and manufacture its own weapons systems. Just a few of India’s most glaring disappointments in indigenous weapons manufacturing include:

- **The *Arjun* Main Battle Tank** began in 1974 and programmed to be in service with the Indian Army by 1984. As of today, the army has not accepted the *Arjun* because it is too heavy for transport across some bridges. It also has problems with its main gun sight, engine reliability and with the turret traverse mechanism and ammunition bins.<sup>155</sup> After spending more than \$68 million to develop the *Arjun* over a 32-year period, the Indian Army has decided to purchase hundreds of Russian-made *T-90* tanks at a cost of over \$666 million, to fill the gap left by the still-developing *Arjun*.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> “Indian Air Force to Procure Specialized C-130 Aircraft,” *INDIADEFENSE*, January 5, 2006 <<http://www.ondia-defense.com/reports/1856>>.

<sup>153</sup> “U.S. Shares Anti-Missile Know-How with India,” *rediff.com*, September 9, 2005 <<http://www.rediff.com/news/2005/sep/09anti.htm>>.

<sup>154</sup> Saikat Datta and Rajesh Ramachandran, “No Bang for the Buck,” *Outlook*, October 18, 2004, 34.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

- **The Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)** began in 1983 as a replacement for India's large and ageing fleet of MiG-21 fighters. As with the *Arjun* tank, the LCA remains in development, and it is unclear when it will be ready for use by the Indian Air Force, despite an investment of \$1.22 billion. In the near future, the air force will issue a global tender for purchase of 126 multi-role combat aircraft to fill the gap left by the LCA. The contract for these fighters is estimated to be worth \$6 billion. (The U.S. F-16s and F-18s are in competition for this contract.)
- **The *Akash*** is an indigenously designed surface-to-air missile costing to date an estimated \$444 million. After 23 years of design and testing development, it is unable to track multi-targets.<sup>157</sup> The result is that India's military will likely turn to Tel Aviv for an alternate to the *Akash*.

New Delhi has had limited success when co-producing weapons systems, and it is through co-production that India will likely try to jump-start its indigenous defense industries. Beginning in the mid-1950s, India's Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) began co-production of the British *Gnat*, followed by the Soviet MiG-21, the British *Jaguar* fighter, and then the Soviet MiG-27. Today HAL is co-producing the *Su-30MKI* and will require mandatory co-production for India's yet-to-be-selected multi-role combat fighters.

One example of New Delhi's co-production is with the Soviet Union for MiG-21 fighter aircraft. This successful venture was the result of the simple 1950s technology and the success of transferring technology in five measure stages:<sup>158</sup>

- Stage 1: All MiG-21s were imported.
- Stage 2: Testing of new MiG-21s was conducted in India.
- Stage 3: The fighters were assembled in India, and testing in India continues.
- Stage 4: HAL began sub-assemblies for the plane.
- Stage 5: New Delhi attempted to become more independent from the Soviets in raw material used to produce the MiG-21s, however without success.<sup>159</sup>

India eventually was able to manufacture about 70 per cent of the MiG-21s, but relied on Moscow for designs, drawings and some of the more complicated materials.<sup>160</sup> In 1985 when MiG-21 production closed, New Delhi had produced about 500 planes.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Chris Smith, *India's Ad Hoc Arsenal; Direction or Drift in Defense Policy*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, (Oxford Press Inc. New York), 1994, 158

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 157.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

The problems and costs of indigenous defense production have not been lost on the Government of India and the Ministry of Defense.

The first step toward modernizing India's procurement procedures was taken in June 2005 when the Minister of Defense announced changes to India's Defense Procurement Procedures (DPP). Some of the changes that will likely affect U.S. and foreign defense companies are:

- A minimum requirement of offsets worth 30 per cent of contracts over \$66 million.
- Direct foreign investment in defense research and development facilities certified by the GoI.<sup>162</sup>
- Requirement of 90 percent transfer of technology for any co-production deal.<sup>163</sup>

Even though the idea of using offsets and co-production to help modernize India's defense industry looks good from a domestic political standpoint, it is unclear if co-production will help or hinder India's drive for defense modernization. India's current infrastructure may not be able to support the envisaged indigenous production. Currently India's electric supplies are 11 percent short of meeting demand, and almost one-third of electricity is lost or stolen during transmission.<sup>164</sup> India's roads are in no better shape. Of 65,000 km of roads, only 9 percent have two lanes in each direction making the transport of goods a slow and difficult task.<sup>165</sup> Finally, there is the question of whether India has the trained manpower to build and work on modern equipment and whether government defense factories will drain a limited skilled manpower pool.

### Corruption in Arms Sales

It seems almost impossible to discuss selling defense articles to India without addressing the problem of corruption in India's defense procurement process. "Arms procurement in India has always been mired in controversy,"<sup>166</sup> and the blame for this corruption goes most often to the "middlemen" who are involved in many arms transactions. The Government of India is well aware of the corruption and has in the past and is now taking steps to try to curb the influence of the middlemen. Mr. A.K. Antony, who was appointed Minister of Defense in October 2006, has a reputation for honesty and is expected to address this issue that has plagued India for decades. Since

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<sup>162</sup> Indian Defense Procurement Procedure, Procurement Manual-2006, August 8, 2006  
<<http://www.india-defence.com/print/2432>> .

<sup>163</sup> U.S. defense contractor interviewed by the author January 11, 2007.

<sup>164</sup> "A Survey of Business in India," *The Economist*, June 3, 2006, 14.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Saikat Dutta, "So Many Slugs in the Underbelly: Can We Never Be Rid of Arms Dealers? Are they a Necessary Evil?" *Outlook*, 30 October, 2006  
<[http://www.outlookindia.com/fullprint.asp?choice\\_2&fodname=20061030&fname=](http://www.outlookindia.com/fullprint.asp?choice_2&fodname=20061030&fname=)> .

U.S. defense companies are now actively seeking to do business in India, and by U.S. law they cannot pay bribes to gain a contract, there is a question whether they will be able to successfully compete for major defense contracts.

Recent examples of alleged corruption in Indian arms purchasing include the *Scorpene* submarine deal, in which it is alleged the original global tender was written to default to the French submarine manufacturer Thales,<sup>167</sup> in a deal worth an estimated \$3.5 billion.<sup>168</sup> Another arms deal under investigation by India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the Israel Aircraft Industries (IAI) deal in which IAI allegedly paid about \$450,000 in bribes to a few senior Indian politicians to secure the *Barak* anti-missile system for the Indian Navy. The deal was worth an estimated \$268 million, \$17 million more than was originally agreed to.<sup>169</sup>

Corruption is endemic to arms purchasing in India. Although India has the laws to curb corruption, enforcement of those laws has been ineffective in the past. The importance of payoffs to political parties cannot be overlooked and may, in fact, scuttle all efforts to lend transparency to defense procurement—unless penalties far outweigh rewards, and justice is certain. Much will depend on the political will of the most senior decision makers, not only to enforce anti-corruption laws but also to forgo opportunities for personal gain or enhanced party coffers. Armed with the Right to Information Act 2005, public and media pressure may have some impact on whether India's decision makers act in the nation's best interests rather than for their own personal or political interests.

## XII. Conclusion

Since the waiving of sanctions against New Delhi in September 2001, the military relationship between the two countries has witnessed a "sea change" in cooperation, marking the end of over five decades of distrust. The rapid development of military cooperation between Washington and New Delhi after 9/11 reflects the new political engagement between the two capitals. The developing strategic partnership will grow out of common national interests—defeat of terrorism, preventing proliferation, energy security, stability in South Asia, maintaining open sea lanes, economic cooperation, and counterbalancing a rising China.

The extent to which the U.S. and India can cooperate on these issues and others will be tempered by international and domestic political realities. The first 50 years of the U.S.-Indian relationship was shaped by the Cold War, including India's role in the NAM. The future relationship will undoubtedly reflect how the U.S.-China relationship evolves, as well as the role of Pakistan, particularly with regard to Afghanistan. If U.S. relations with China deteriorate, then India becomes much more

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Saikat Datta, "Navy's Bofors?" *Outlook*, 20 February 2006, 34.

<sup>169</sup> Sudha Ramachandran, "Indian Weapons Imports Under the Gun" *Asia Times*, 19 October 2006 <[http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia)>.

important. Similarly, if U.S. relations with China improve, then India could become somewhat less crucial as a strategic partner.

Domestic politics will also play an important role in shaping the relationship. In May 2003 the U.S. requested that New Delhi send combat troops to post-war Iraq to help in stabilization operations. Yet the U.S. invasion of Iraq had little popular support in India, and this lack of domestic support resulted in New Delhi denying U.S. requests for assistance in Iraq. Similarly, U.S. domestic politics, especially in a national election cycle, may limit the extent to which lawmakers will support technology sharing and nuclear partnership with India, thus affecting the military relationship.

Although the relationship will likely be a friendly strategic partnership, it will not be an alliance as the U.S. enjoys with Britain or Australia. This partnership is more than a matter of convenience, however, and is a reflection of shared values and common strategic interests. The military relationship shows promise of growth, albeit at a moderate pace.

The U.S. and India will at times have to agree to disagree. The U.S. arming of Pakistan is now and has always been a concern for India. Washington also sees India's political relationship with Iran, a long-time friend to India, as a possible conflict of mutual interests, since the U.S. is working to isolate Iran diplomatically and economically.

Military cooperation will support and further broaden the U.S.-India strategic partnership. In fact, military engagement can be a driving force to further the partnership by building trust and mutually beneficial outcomes for both nations' defense and security interests. The military relationship will continue to move forward in the areas of personnel exchanges, military exercises, visits from senior officers and officials, and military sales. The limits of this cooperation are not defined as yet, and will likely gain clarity by 2011, when India completes its eleventh five-year military modernization plan.

The next five years should be viewed as an open window of opportunity for U.S. defense sales. During this time frame, new equipment, systems and doctrine will be developed and deployed. Co-production will be key to the success of India's focus on modernizing its armed forces and making its state monopoly on weapons design and production more efficient and economical. Working with India's Ministry of Defense will be challenging, as it has been slow to adopt new methods of design and manufacturing, and operates by a set of procedures that do not align well with those of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Another area of cooperation will likely be for disaster relief, as happened after the 2004 tsunami. Military cooperation is also possible for peacekeeping and anti-terrorism operations. Any anti-terrorism mission will likely be unforeseen and could require immediate action. The U.S.-India exchange programs and military exercises will then show themselves to be of great value, as the two militaries will be able to draw on past experience to execute these types of missions.

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